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C&MS-48

A280.39
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A GUIDE TO U.S. CUSTOMS INSPECTORS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Consumer and Marketing Service Grain Division



SAMPLING SEED

...Offered for importation
under the Federal Seed Act-

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**This publication originally issued in July 1963
AMS-508 by the Agricultural Marketing Service.
Service without change in text.**

I. THE FEDERAL SEED ACT AND IMPORTED SEED

The importation of agricultural and vegetable seed is regulated by the Federal Seed Act. The purpose of the import provisions of the Act is to prohibit the importation of low quality seed. If seed is to be admitted into the United States, the purity and germination must meet certain minimum requirements, the amount of weed seed cannot exceed specified quantities, and the labeling must be truthful.

II. RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAMPLING

The joint regulations under the Federal Seed Act, administered by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Agriculture, provide that the collectors of customs have direct responsibility for sampling seed offered for importation.

III. THE KINDS OF SEED TO BE SAMPLED

Obtain samples of the following kinds only when declared for seeding purposes:

Barley	Chickpea	Peanut
Bean, adzuki	Corn, field	Rice
Bean, field	Cowpea	Rye
Bean, lima	Flax	Safflower
Bean, mung	Hemp	Sesame
Buckwheat, common	Mustard	Soybean
Canarygrass	Mustard, black	Sunflower
Castorbean	Mustard, white	Wheat
Celery	Oat	

Obtain samples of all other kinds subject to the Act regardless of the purpose for which imported. The kinds of agricultural and vegetable seeds subject to the Act are found in Section IV of this publication or section 201.2(h) & (i) of the rules and regulations under the Federal Seed Act.

IV. SMALL LOTS NOT ORDINARILY SAMPLED

It is not usually practical to sample lots that weigh less than the weights listed below:

<u>Agricultural seeds</u>	
<u>Kind</u>	<u>Minimum weight for sampling</u>
	<u>Pounds</u>
Alfalfa	25
Alfilaria	25
Alyceclover	25
Bahiagrass	25
Barley	100
Bean, adzuki	100
Bean, field	100
Bean, mung	100
Bean, (see velvetbean)	---
Beet, field	100
Beet, sugar	100
Beggarweed	25
Bentgrass or	25
Bentgrass, colonial	25
Bentgrass, creeping	25
Bentgrass, velvet	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Bermudagrass, common	25
Bermudagrass, giant	25
Bluegrass, annual	25
Bluegrass, bulbous	25
Bluegrass, Canada	25
Bluegrass, glaucantha	25
Bluegrass, Kentucky	25
Bluegrass, Nevada	25
Bluegrass, rough	25
Bluegrass, Texas	25
Bluegrass, wood	25
Bluestem, big	25
Bluestem, little	25
Bluestem, sand	25
Bluestem, yellow	25
Brome, field	25
Brome, mountain	25
Brome, smooth	25
Broomcorn	100
Buckwheat	100
Buffalograss	25
Bufflegrass	25
Bur-clover, California	25
Bur-clover, spotted	25
Burnet, little	25
Buttonclover	25
Canarygrass	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Canarygrass, reed	25
Carpetgrass	25
Castorbean	100
Chess, soft	25
Chickpea	100
Clover, alsike	25
Clover, berseem	25
Clover, cluster	25
Clover, crimson	25
Clover, Kenya	25
Clover, large hop	25
Clover, small hop (suckling)	25
Clover, ladino	25
Clover, lappa	25
Clover, Persian	25
Clover, red or	25
Red clover, mammoth	25
Red clover, medium	25
Clover, rose	25
Clover, strawberry	25
Clover, sub (subterranean)	25
Clover, white (also see clover, ladino)	25
Clover, (also see Alyce- clover, Bur-clover, But- tonclover, Sourclover, Sweetclover)	---

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Corn, field	100
Corn, pop	100
Cotton	100
Cowpea	100
Crested dogtail	25
Crotalaria, lance	25
Crotalaria, showy	25
Crotalaria, slenderleaf	25
Crotalaria, striped	25
Crotalaria, Sunn	25
Crownvetch	25
Dallisgrass	25
Dichondra	25
Dropseed, sand	25
Emmer	100
Fescue, Chewings	25
Fescue, hair	25
Fescue, hard	25
Fescue, meadow	25
Fescue, red	25
Fescue, sheep	25
Fescue, tall	25
Flax	25
Grama, blue	25
Grama, side-oats	25
Guar	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Guineagrass	25
Hardinggrass	25
Hemp	100
Indiangrass, yellow	25
Indigo, hairy	25
Japanese lawngrass	25
Johnsongrass	25
Kudzu	25
Lentil	25
Lespedeza, Korean	25
Lespedeza, sericea or Chinese	25
Lespedeza, Siberian	25
Lespedeza, striate	25
Lovegrass, sand	25
Lovegrass, weeping	25
Lupine, blue	100
Lupine, white	100
Lupine, yellow	100
Manilagrass	25
Meadow foxtail	25
Medick, black	25
Millet, browntop	25
Millet, foxtail	25
Millet, Japanese	25
Millet, pearl	25
Millet, proso	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Molassesgrass	25
Mustard	25
Mustard, black	25
Mustard, white	25
Napiergrass	25
Oat	100
Oatgrass, tall	25
Orchardgrass	25
Panicgrass, blue	25
Panicgrass, green	25
Peanut	100
Pea, field	100
Poa trivialis (see Bluegrass, rough)	---
Rape, annual	25
Rape, bird	25
Rape, turnip	25
Rape, winter	25
Redtop	25
Rescuegrass	25
Rhodesgrass	25
Rice	100
Ricegrass, Indian	25
Roughpea	100
Rye	100
Ryegrass, Italian or annual	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Ryegrass, perennial	25
Ryegrass, wimmera	25
Safflower	100
Sainfoin	100
Sesame	25
Sesbania	25
Smilo	25
Sorghum	100
Sorghum alnum	25
Sorghum	25
Sourclover	25
Soybean	100
Spelt	100
Sudangrass	25
Sunflower	100
Sweetclover or	25
Sweetclover, white	25
Sweetclover, yellow	25
Sweet vernalgrass	25
Switchgrass	25
Timothy	25
Tobacco	1
Trefoil, big	25
Trefoil, birdsfoot	25
Vaseygrass	25
Veldtgrass	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Velvetbean	100
Velvetgrass	25
Vetch or	100
Vetch, common	100
Vetch, hairy	100
Vetch, Hungarian	100
Vetch, Monantha	100
Vetch, narrowleaf	100
Vetch, purple	100
Vetch, woolypod	100
Wheat or	100
Wheat, common	100
Wheat, club	100
Wheat, durum	100
Wheat, Polish	100
Wheat, poulard	
Wheatgrass, beardless	25
Wheatgrass, fairway crested	25
Wheatgrass, standard crested	25
Wheatgrass, intermediate	25
Wheatgrass, pubescent	25
Wheatgrass, Siberian	25
Wheatgrass, slender	25
Wheatgrass, tall	25

Agricultural seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Wheatgrass, western	25
Wild-rye, Canada	25
Wild-rye, Russian	25
Zoysia Japonica (see Japanese lawngrass)	---
Zoysia matrella (see Manilagrass)	---

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Vegetable seeds

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Artichoke	25
Asparagus	25
Asparagusbean	25
Bean	25
Bean, lima	25
Bean, runner	25
Beet	25

Vegetable seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Broadbean	25
Broccoli	5
Brussels sprouts	5
Burdock, great	10
Cabbage	5
Cabbage, tronchuda	5
Cantaloupe (see muskmelon)	---
Cardoon	25
Carrot	5
Cauliflower	5
Celeriac	5
Celery	5
Chard, Swiss	25
Chicory	5
Chinese cabbage	5
Chives	5
Citron	25
Collards	5
Corn, sweet	25
Cornsalad	5
Cowpea	25
Cress, garden	5
Cress, upland	5
Cress, water	5
Cucumber	25
Dandelion	5

Vegetable seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Eggplant	5
Endive	5
Kale	5
Kale, Chinese	5
Kale, Siberian	5
Kohlrabi	5
Leek	5
Lettuce	5
Muskmelon	25
Mustard	5
Mustard, spinach	5
Okra	25
Onion	5
Onion, Welsh	5
Pak-choi	5
Parsley	5
Parsnip	5
Pea	25
Pepper	5
Pumpkin	25
Radish	25
Rhubarb	5
Rutabaga	5
Salsify	25
Sorrel	5
Soybean	25

Vegetable seeds (continued)

Kind	Minimum weight for sampling
	<u>Pounds</u>
Spinach	25
Spinach, New Zealand	25
Squash	25
Tomato	5
Tomato, husk	5
Turnip	5
Watermelon	25

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V. DECLARATION AND LABELING REQUIRED BEFORE
SAMPLING PROCEEDS

DECLARATION

Sampling of agricultural and vegetable seed must not proceed unless a "declaration of labeling" has been filed by the importer for each lot of seed being imported. The labeling on the container should be compared with the information given in the declaration of labeling to determine that the declaration is complete and accurate. Any discrepancy should be brought to the attention of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

LABELING

In addition, sampling of agricultural seed must not proceed unless each container is labeled to show:

1. The name of the kind
2. A lot number or other mark

In addition, sampling of vegetable seed must not proceed unless each container is labeled to show:

1. The name of the kind and variety
2. A lot number or other mark

As indicated in section 201.218 of the joint regulations under the Federal Seed Act (see TD-50071 and amendments), seed cannot be released from customs custody under a redelivery bond unless each container of seed is labeled as shown above. Customs regulations require that the name of the country of origin also be shown on the containers.

VI. THE REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE -- ITS IMPORTANCE

The object of sampling is to obtain a sample that represents each individual lot of seed offered for importation. A representative sample is a must if seed quality is to be accurately measured for the following reasons:

1. To prohibit the importation of low quality seed. Low quality seed must first be detected if it is to be prohibited entry. Representative samples are essential for detection.
2. To furnish the importer with accurate test results on the seed he is importing. Samples drawn by customs officials may be tested by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (on a fee basis) upon request of the importer. The importer may use the test results to label the lot with information required by State and/or Federal seed laws. If the sample tested is not representative of the lot, future labeling may be inaccurate.
3. To provide the Bureau of Customs with accurate tests for use in classification or appraisement.
4. To promote efficient handling of importations by the Bureau of Customs and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The present heavy workload of the Bureau of Customs and the U. S. Department of Agriculture in handling importations is unnecessarily increased by the failure to obtain representative samples.

VII. HOW TO DRAW A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE

1. Sample the required number of bags from each lot.

Before starting to sample, determine the number of bags declared on the entry papers, the number of bags actually on hand, and the number of those that must be sampled. The number to be sampled may be determined from the following:

Number of bags which must be sampled			
Number of bags in lot	Minimum number sampled	Number of bags in lot	Minimum number sampled
1 to 6	*		
7 to 14	6	135 to 144	19
15 to 24	7	145 to 154	20
25 to 34	8	155 to 164	21
35 to 44	9	165 to 174	22
45 to 54	10	175 to 184	23
55 to 64	11	185 to 194	24
65 to 74	12	195 to 204	25
75 to 84	13	205 to 214	26
85 to 94	14	215 to 224	27
95 to 104	15	225 to 234	28
105 to 114	16	235 to 244	29
115 to 124	17	245 to 254	30
125 to 134	18	255 or more	30

* Sample each bag, and take at least five trierfuls.

2. Use a probe or trier long enough to reach all portions of the container being sampled.

In most importations a 30-inch or 39-inch trier will reach all portions of the container being sampled. The recommended triers are pictured and identified as Nos. 236 and 78 on pages 36 and 34 of the 1959-1960 Seedburo catalog (Seedburo Equipment Company, 618-626 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois) and as Nos. 530 and 536 on pages 17 and 14 of the 1959-1961 Burrows catalog (Burrows Equipment Company, 1316 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, Illinois).

3. When there is more than one lot in an importation, sample each lot separately.

As the sample is being drawn, check the lot number on each bag sampled to make certain that a bag from another lot is not being sampled.

4. The portion drawn from each bag should be examined to determine whether it is apparently of similar quality as the other bags identified by the same lot number or mark. If any bag appears not similar, the portion should be kept separate and identified as a subsample, and the bag should be marked in a similar manner for later identification; for example, "Subsample No. 1." Further examination of the lot may be appropriate to determine the extent of the apparent lack of uniformity.

5. CAUTION: Always wash your hands and any other part of your body which may have been in contact with seed treated with a poisonous substance.

VIII. SAMPLING REGULATIONS UNDER THE FEDERAL SEED ACT (7 CFR 201.208 - 201.213)

SAMPLING

201.208 Seed

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, the collector of customs shall draw and forward samples of all seed imported or offered for importation into the United States except the following kinds which he shall sample only when imported for seeding purposes and when declared for seeding purposes:

Barley	Chickpea	Peanut
Bean, adzuki	Corn, field	Rice
Bean, field	Cowpea	Rye
Bean, lima	Flax	Safflower
Bean, mung	Hemp	Sesame
Buckwheat, common	Mustard	Soybean
Canarygrass	Mustard, black	Sunflower
Castorbean	Mustard, white	Wheat
Celery	Oat	

(b) It is not ordinarily practical to sample and test small lots in importations of seed. The size

of lots not ordinarily sampled is shown in table 3 in section 201.221a. No release by the U.S.Department of Agriculture will be necessary for seed not sampled.

201.209 Screenings

The collector of customs shall, upon request received from the Deputy Administrator for Marketing Services, Agricultural Marketing Service, prior to importation, draw and forward samples of all screenings imported or offered for importation into the United States.

201.210 Method of sampling

(a) In order to secure a representative sample, equal portions shall be taken from evenly distributed parts of the quantity of seed or screenings to be sampled. Access shall be had to all parts of that quantity. When more than one trierful of seed is drawn from a bag, different paths shall be followed. When more than one handful is taken from a bag, the handfuls shall be taken from well-separated points.

(b) For free-flowing seed in bags or bulk, a probe or trier shall be used. For small free-flowing seed in bags a probe or trier long enough to sample all portions of the bag should be used.

(c) Non-free-flowing seed, such as grass seed, uncleaned seed, or screenings difficult to sample with a probe or trier, shall be sampled by thrusting the hand into the bulk and withdrawing representative portions. The hand shall be inserted in an open position and the fingers shall be held closely together while the hand is being inserted and the portion withdrawn.

(d) The portions shall be combined into a composite sample except that if the quantity represented to be a lot does not appear to be of uniform quality as required in paragraph (e) of this section the separate portions shall be forwarded together but without being combined into a composite sample.

(e) A quantity of seed designated as one lot shall be regarded as such for sampling only if every portion or bag of seed in the quantity is uniform within permitted tolerances as to percentage of pure seed, percentage of germination and hard seed, percentage of weed seed, and rate of occurrence of noxious-weed seeds.

(f) When an importation consists of more than one lot, each lot shall be sampled separately.

(g) Sampling shall not proceed unless (1) each container is stenciled or otherwise labeled to show the lot designation and the name of the kind, or kind and variety, appearing on the invoice and other entry papers and (2) a

"Declaration of Labeling" has been filed by the importer of record as required under section 201.228a.

201.211 Bulk

Bulk seeds or screenings shall be sampled by inserting a long probe or thrusting the hand into the bulk as circumstances require. At least as many trierfuls or handfuls as the minimum required for the same quantity of seed or screenings in bags of a size customarily used for such seed or screenings shall be taken.

201.212 Bags

(a) For lots of six bags or less, each bag shall be sampled. A total of at least five trierfuls shall be taken.

(b) For lots of more than six bags, five bags plus at least 10 percent of the number of bags in the lot shall be sampled. (Round off numbers with decimals to the nearest whole number, raising 0.5 to the next whole number). Regardless of the lot size, it is not necessary that more than 30 bags be sampled.

(c) When sampling seed in small containers, which it is not practical to sample as required in paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, entire unopened containers may be taken in sufficient number to supply a minimum size sample as required in section 201.213. The sample may consist of the contents

of one container, or two or more containers when combined.

201.213 Size of sample

Samples of agricultural seed shall be not less than one quart. Samples of screenings shall be not less than two quarts. Samples of vegetable seed shall be not less than one pint, except that samples of one-fourth pint will be sufficient from importations of five pounds or less. Unused portions of samples of rare or expensive seeds will be returned by the Agricultural Marketing Service upon request of the importer.

201.230 Exportation of rejected seed or screenings

When seed or screenings which have been refused admission into the commerce of the United States are exported, the collector of customs shall notify the office of the Department of Agriculture that issued the notice of rejection and shall also submit to said office a sample drawn from the seed at the time of exportation.

IX. FORWARDING SAMPLES

Samples are forwarded to the U. S. Department of Agriculture seed laboratory which serves the port of entry.

X. FORM GR-237

U. S. Department of Agriculture form GR-237

describes the sample to the seed laboratory. Usually the importer or his agent prepares the form. The customs officer must check the information on the form for accuracy, insert any pertinent information that is missing, and sign the form. The yellow (last) copy is sent to the ultimate consignee as his notice that the seed must be held intact until released. The pink copy is folded and placed in the sample container along with the declaration of labeling. The original and remaining copies intact with carbons are sent by letter mail to the seed laboratory.

XI. SUPPLIES

Bags, plastic bags as innerliners for treated seed, franked and addressed mailing tags, and form GR-237 are furnished by the U. S. Department of Agriculture seed laboratories upon request.





